

YUKON NATIVE LANGUAGE CENTRE ACTIVITIES REPORT: Spring 2000

New millennium greetings from the Yukon Native Language Centre! This spring has seen continued demand for native language teacher training and literacy sessions, with four literacy in-service workshops scheduled for May alone. Also this spring the Centre offered a credit course in linguistics for students in the Yukon Native Teacher Education Program at Yukon College. Centre staff made several presentations to different groups and organizations, and played a key role in the Native Language Conference held at CYFN in March. The Centre has also continued to develop new teaching materials and has released its new Publications Catalogue for 2000.



Linguistics Course for YNTEP

During the spring semester, Centre staff taught an introductory language course, Linguistics 175 (University of Regina), for first-year students in the Yukon Native Teacher Education Program (YNTEP) at Yukon College. Twelve students participated in the course, which, besides basic linguistics, covered the phonetics and sentence structure of Yukon native languages.

Native Language Teacher Training

The Centre offered a Certificate training session from April 3 to 7 for native language instructors. The session was attended by nineteen participants. Speakers of eight Athapaskan languages attended including two Sekani teachers from Fort Ware, B.C. Two Inuvialuktun speakers from Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk in the NWT were also in attendance.

The training session covered methodology, language structure, and professionalism, with a variety of activities being demonstrated and practised. During the sharing sessions the participants gave short presentations on a variety of materials and methods which they use or could use in their native language programs.

The Certificate course requires three years of training and teaching experience to complete. It is accredited by Yukon College, and graduates of the program receive Yukon College certificates.

Presentations

In January, YNLC staff made a presentation on the activities and materials of the Centre for French monitors in French immersion school programs.

Centre staff also gave a demonstration on genealogy for students in the Yukon Native Teacher Education Program, providing information on researching family histories.

In April, Centre staff did a presentation for Kwanlin Dun traditional native language teachers. The session covered the type of training offered by the Centre, the importance of lesson planning, and demonstration lessons. Staff and participants also viewed materials developed at the Centre and discussed the value of team teaching.

Conferences

In March, Centre staff participated in the native language conference, *Stepping Together Towards Fluency*, sponsored by CYFN. Staff members did a presentation on the work and activities of the Language Centre, and mounted a display and sales booth of both print and audiovisual materials. The Centre advised conference participants that they are considering a training program for translators for the courts, hospitals, and band meetings.

In April, staff members Jo-Anne Johnson and Margaret Workman were invited to demonstrate the innovative language teaching methods pioneered by the Centre at the 6th Annual Heritage Language Conference held in Monument Valley, Utah. They taught a demonstration lesson and spoke on the use of techniques such as drilling, repetition and flashcards. They also emphasized the importance of concentrating on oral language up to Grade 4 before beginning literacy training. The possibility of providing follow-up training by using video was discussed.

In-Services

Two Tlingit literacy in-service workshops were held on February 14 and 18 for the Teslin and Carcross dialects. The visiting instructor was Dr. Jeff Leer from the Alaska Native Language Centre, University of Alaska Fairbanks. The four participants developed listening exercises and teaching materials for classroom use, and checked words for the Tlingit dictionary.

On May 8 and 9 a Southern Tutchone literacy in-service workshop was held, attended by nine participants. The workshop was designed as an orientation session for younger adults who have expressed an interest in entering the language teaching field. Participants discussed lesson planning, practised conversation, and taught a demonstration lesson.

A Northern Tutchone literacy in-service workshop was held on May 11 and 12 for nine native language instructors, and a Kaska literacy in-service workshop was held on May 18 and 19 for four native language instructors. In both workshops, participants produced a variety of teaching materials, developed listening exercises, and worked on Talking Books.

On May 25 and 26, a Southern Tutchone literacy in-service was held for four trainee language instructors. Activities included listening exercises, transcription exercises, conversation lessons, and an introduction to the alphabet.

Yukon College Graduation

Three teachers have completed the Certificate program and will receive certificates at Yukon College's graduation ceremony in June. They are Mabel Henry of Dawson City, Vivian Smith of Haines Junction, and Agnes Winzer of Beaver Creek. CYFN Grand Chief Ed Schultz is scheduled to present the certificates to the YNLC graduates.

School Program Visits

Jo-Anne Johnson, Rural Programs Coordinator, continued her program visits to the communities in the spring, observing in classrooms and completing reports. She visited Dawson City, April 24 to 27, and Beaver Creek, May 1 to 3, where both teachers will graduate from the Certificate program this June.

Urban Programs Coordinator and Southern Tutchone Language Specialist Margaret Workman visited schools in Whitehorse, including Elijah Smith Elementary, Takhini Elementary, and Porter Creek Secondary. She will be visiting Whitehorse Elementary and F.H. Collins Secondary later in the spring.

New Materials

The Centre's new Publications Catalogue for 2000 has been released, containing thirty new publications among its listings. The catalogue is also available on the Centre's website at www.yukoncollege.yk.ca/ynlc.

Margaret Workman has completed a draft of *Kwädq̄y Kwändūr*, a book of traditional Southern Tutchone stories, which she transcribed and translated from tapes of several Southern Tutchone elders. The volume will be more than 100 pages long and will have an attractive cover featuring a First Nations design and photographs of the elders. A final check on the book is underway and it will be available for distribution this fall.

This spring has seen work on a variety of native language multimedia projects. More than 20 new Talking Books will be completed soon, complementing the 70 or so currently available in the four series The Moose Hunt, Drying Fish, At Home, and Camping. Work continues on the printed Story Booklet versions of the Talking Books. A print run of more than 30 Story Booklets is planned for the summer.

Planning for Fall

The Centre is already planning for a busy fall and for the continuation of its teacher training and materials development work. A Certificate training session is planned for September 25-29.

If you would like more information on the Centre's programs or publications, please write us at Yukon Native Language Centre, Yukon College, Box 2799, Whitehorse, Yukon, Y1A 5K4. We can also be reached by telephone (867) 668-8820, fax (867) 668-8825, and e-mail at ynlc@yukoncollege.yk.ca. You may also visit our website, www.yukoncollege.yk.ca/ynlc.